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Safety

TRAIN HOLD CRITERIA

COMPLIANCE WITH THIS PUBLICATION IS MANDATORY

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This instruction describes responsibilities, procedures and the criteria to be used in determining train protection and subsequent “hold” or “proceed” decisions during missile launch operations. It further describes limits associated with delays when toxic hazard conditions are present, as well as disaster response procedures. It applies to all 30th Space Wing (30 SW) units involved in missile launch operations. The use of the name or make of any specific manufacture, commercial product, commodity, or service in this publication does not imply endorsement by the Air Force.

SUMMARY OF REVISIONS

The revision of this publication is to meet the format standards required by the Air Force. No content material has changed. Some required format changes have been made to allow for the conversion process.

1. Responsibilities:

- 1.1. The Commander, 30th Space Wing (30 SW/CC) has the overall responsibility for the safety of all launch operations.
- 1.2. The Mission Flight Control Officer (MFCO) (30 SW/SEO) determines what portions of the railroad track require protective measures.
- 1.3. The Aeronautical Control Officer (ACO) (30 RANS/DOO) monitors railroad traffic and clears or holds trains if required.
- 1.4. Flight Safety Analyst (FSA) (30 SW/SEY) analyzes potential hazards to the railroad tracks due to launch operation.
- 1.5. Range Operations Commander (ROC) (30 RANS/DOO) manages Range countdown activities and passes final Range clearance for launch.

2. Background and Coordination. The Southern Pacific Transportation Company (SPTC) right-of-way crossing Vandenberg AFB is private property, with the SPTC having the rights of a property owner. Most launch sites are located in areas where overflight of the railroad is unavoidable. A few of the northern Minuteman sites near Point Sal may not require railroad safety precautions. Coordination with the SPTC during launch countdown operations is effected through direct line communication between the trainmaster and the Aeronautical Control Officer (ACO) in the Area Control Center.

3. Operations Procedures.

3.1. The ACO (30 RANS/DOO) will ensure the current train location, movement, and schedules for all trains in the Vandenberg AFB area are documented and reported to the ROC (30 RANS/DOO), Bldg. 7000, 816 13th Street, Vandenberg AFB CA 93437-5233, and MFCO (30 SW/SEO), Bldg. 7015, 806 13th Street, Vandenberg AFB CA 93437-5230, as defined in 30 SWI 10-112, *Range Surveillance*.

3.2. The Flight Safety Analyst (FSA) (30 SW/SEY) will analyze predicted hazards from debris and toxic hazards to SPTC assets during the prelaunch countdown preparation and provide this information, as well as any updates, to the MFCO throughout the countdown, as necessary.

3.3. The MFCO will determine and update the train protection area, based on information received from the FSA, and pass this information to the ACO as soon as possible. The train protection area will be based on the Impact Limit Line, the train hazard impact probability contours, the Tier 2 catastrophic abort toxic hazard corridor (THC), or the Tier 2 normal THC, whichever is more conservative. The MFCO will make countdown "hold" and ability to "pick up the count" decisions based on train status received from the ACO.

3.4. The ROC will remain aware of all range user program objectives and the optimum liftoff time within the launch window. The ROC will keep the MFCO informed at all times of any range user objectives or decisions which may affect, or be affected by, train hold criteria. When a critical train problem arises during the countdown, but prior to terminal count, the ROC will coordinate with the range user, the MFCO, and the ACO to establish the best time to hold or to resume the launch countdown.

3.5. A launch operation will be held if a train is projected to be in the train protection area, and the Commander has not granted a waiver for the train to be there at liftoff. The ACO will hold all trains which conservatively might be in the train protection area at liftoff. The one exception to this is when the train to be held is an on-time AMTRAK. Holding an on-time AMTRAK will result in a fee charged by the SPTC to the range user, so the ACO must first check with the ROC for concurrence to hold the train. The ROC will seek approval from the range user to hold an on-time AMTRAK train. The ROC will inform the ACO when approval to hold these trains has been granted by the range user. If the range user does not grant approval to hold the train, the ROC will coordinate with the range user, MFCO, and ACO to establish the best time to hold the launch countdown.

3.6. In the event of a launch area destruct action or self-abort, where land and railroad impact is strongly suspected, the MFCO will instruct the ACO to request the trainmaster to stop all trains until the track can be inspected and cleared by the SPTC. For on-base inspection and clearance, the Disaster Control group will assist SPTC personnel in inspecting and clearing the SPTC tracks. The ACO will notify the MFCO and ROC when a train has stopped and when SPTC has determined the tracks to be clear.

3.7. If catastrophic abort occurs and updated THC analysis shows a Tier 2 over a stationary or moving train (train was held due to hazardous conditions or was allowed to proceed through an area originally not deemed hazardous), the MFCO will pass to the ACO identification of the spur tracks where the Tier 2 THC is entered and exited. The ACO will request that the trainmaster advise the train engineer to close all open windows and doors while in this area. If the train must be held until the tracks are certified to be clear of debris, the ACO will request the engineer maintain a buttoned-up configuration until further notice. If the train is moving, no attempt will be made to stop it unless a Tier 3 THC is anticipated on its path. The MFCO will notify the ACO when hazardous conditions no longer exist and trains are cleared to pass through the previously identified THC.

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